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Political Control of the Soviet Armed Forces

A Research Paper

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Political Control of the Soviet Armed Forces

Overview

Political controls have been an integral part of the Soviet armed forces since their inception. Presently, the Main Political Directorate of the Soviet Army and Navy (MPD) accomplishes this function through a hierarchy of Communist Party organs. These bodies exercise political control down to the company level in the field.

Although the placement of political officers in the military has been a source of friction between the military officer and his political counterpart (*zampolit*), a mutual dependence between the two seems to have alleviated this problem. The respective responsibilities of the two officials for the technical proficiency and political reliability of a unit are seen by the professional commander and the MPD representative as mutually reinforcing. As a further incentive, the party has demonstrated consistently that it will not accept diminution of the political officer's role and that professional advancement for a military officer is dependent on recognition of this relationship.

Indoctrination methods of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) continue to receive official criticism for failing to prevent the growth of disciplinary problems in the armed forces. The MPD seems unable to devise imaginative new ways to inculcate ideology and continues to fall back principally upon massive doses of Marxist-Leninist medicine. As a result, many young soldiers are probably anesthetized to ideological matters.

There has been a gradual decrease in the percentage of CPSU members in the armed forces. This is primarily attributed to a series of decrees passed during the sixties and seventies that effectively tightened party admission policies. The decline in military representation in the party, however, will probably have little actual effect on the military's influence or role in policymaking.

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Political Control of the Soviet Armed Forces

Role and Organization of the Main Political Directorate

Political control mechanisms have been an integral part of the Soviet armed forces since their inception. Initially, the controls were intended to verify that Communist Party policies were being carried out in the armed forces and that all personnel were given a thorough Communist political indoctrination.¹ Six decades later, the Soviet regime continues to maintain an extensive reinforced political apparatus—under the Main Political Directorate of the Soviet Army and Navy (MPD)—to accomplish essentially the same functions.

This apparatus extends from the Defense Ministry in Moscow where the MPD functions with the “rights of a department of the Communist Party Central Committee” to the company level in the field. It provides the civilian political leadership with a tested means of explaining its policies to the troops and of receiving political feedback from all command levels.

This system of political control has been a source of friction between the political officers and the professional military. In recent years, however, the party has demonstrated consistently that it will not accept diminution of the political officer's role and that professional advancement for an officer is dependent on recognition of this reality.

Mission. The MPD is formally charged with:

- Directing the activities of its subordinate political control organs as well as the party and Young Communist League (Komsomol) organizations in the armed forces.
- Verifying the performance of the political control organs and military party organizations to ensure that party, state, and Defense Ministry orders are carried out.

¹ The special departments of the Committee of State Security (KGB) which perform the counterintelligence function in the armed forces also monitor the political reliability of military personnel and provide a second channel for this type of reporting.

- Participating in the selection, assignment, and political evaluation of military and political officers.
- Supervising the content and ideological direction of the military press, including the central military newspapers, journals, and publishing houses.
- Supervising military-political training institutions and controlling training, research, and curriculums in the social sciences sections at military academies, schools, and military training institutions.
- Supplying the troops with political, educational, and propaganda materials and equipment.
- Reviewing the needs, attitudes, and well-being of Defense Ministry personnel, including its civilian employees.
- Recording and maintaining statistics on the numbers of Communist Party and Komsomol members in the armed forces (currently over 90 percent of the Soviet military).

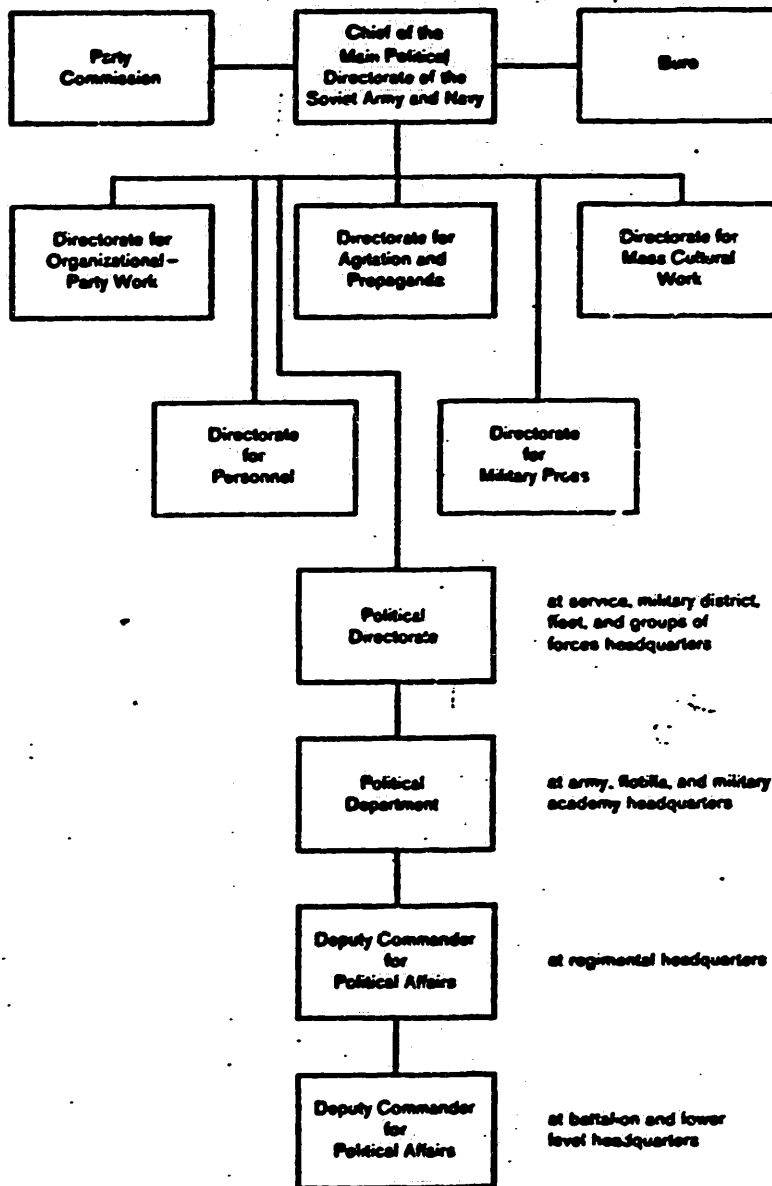
In wartime, the MPD, probably heavily reinforced from the ranks of the civilian party apparatus, would be expected to intensify its indoctrination and verification functions.² Officers of the MPD simulate their combat role in Soviet exercises during peacetime.

✓ **Organization.** The headquarters of the MPD is organized into five directorates: one each for organizational-party work, agitation and propaganda, mass cultural work, personnel, and the military press (see figure 1). The directorate heads comprise the core of the MPD's decisionmaking *buro* (bureau), headed by MPD Chief Army General A. A. Yepishev. The *buro* also includes Yepishev's first deputy and deputy, the chiefs of the political directorates of the five forces (ground, strategic rocket, naval, air, and air defense), and the editor of the newspaper

² During World War II the senior political officer at each echelon was required to countersign all written combat orders before they entered into effect.

Figure 1

Organization of the Main Political Directorate of the Soviet Army and Navy (MPD)



Krasnaya Zvezda (Red Star).³ An elected party commission, whose membership is approved by the Central Committee, considers appeals to decisions on party membership and disciplinary matters made by lower level party commissions.

At the next lower military echelon, political directorates operate in the headquarters of the military districts, fleets, and groups of forces abroad. In lower echelon headquarters and institutions such as military academies, the MPD is represented by a political department.

The political officer at the regimental level has a small staff, while the deputy commander for political affairs (the *zampolit*) at the battalion and lower levels has no staff but receives ad hoc off-duty assistance from Komsomol or party members.

Leadership. Gen. A. A. Yepishev, who has headed the MPD since May 1962, is the senior political officer in the Soviet armed forces and is the principal link between the Communist Party apparatus and the Soviet military establishment. He ranks fourth in the military protocol order, after Defense Minister D. F. Ustinov and First Deputy Ministers Marshal N. V. Ogarkov and Marshal V. G. Kulikov, but before First Deputy Minister Marshal S. L. Sokolov (even though Sokolov's military rank—Marshal of the Soviet Union—is senior to Yepishev's).⁴

✓ Yepishev does not appear to be one of the key figures in Soviet decisionmaking on defense issues. For instance, he is not thought to be a member of the Defense Council, nor has he or the MPD played any apparent role in such matters as SALT or MBFR.

✓ General Yepishev is, however, a member and participant in the Defense Ministry's Collegium, a consultative body which considers important defense problems, including the structure of the armed forces, their mobilization readiness, and combat and political training. The Defense Minister reportedly chairs this

organization even though party leader General Secretary Brezhnev appears to be a member (see figure 2).

✓ It is the responsibility of Yepishev and his political officers to monitor the execution of, and to develop support for, the top leadership's military policy decisions. Although General Yepishev may not be directly involved in making these decisions, his activities at home and abroad illustrate the scope and importance of his mission. His April 1979 trip to Afghanistan, for instance, suggests that Yepishev was there for a purpose other than commemoration of the first anniversary of the Afghan revolution—perhaps to provide assessments and recommendations for the further formulation of Soviet military policy in that country.

Yepishev is ultimately accountable to the Politburo * for the military's political reliability. He also informs the Minister of Defense on the status of troop morale, discipline, and political work. His political officers are also accountable to their immediate superior political officers. In addition, they must inform their unit commanders about their activities.

✓ **Relations With the Central Committee Apparatus.** According to the official Soviet description, the Main Political Directorate operates "with the rights of" a Central Committee department, serving the Secretariat of the CPSU and the Politburo. As head of this "department," Yepishev would operate as a party functionary coordinating the implementation of the top leadership's policy and government activity in his substantive area.

The Administrative Organs Department. Of the other Central Committee departments, the Administrative Organs Department (AOD) maintains the most visible link with the armed forces.⁵ This department

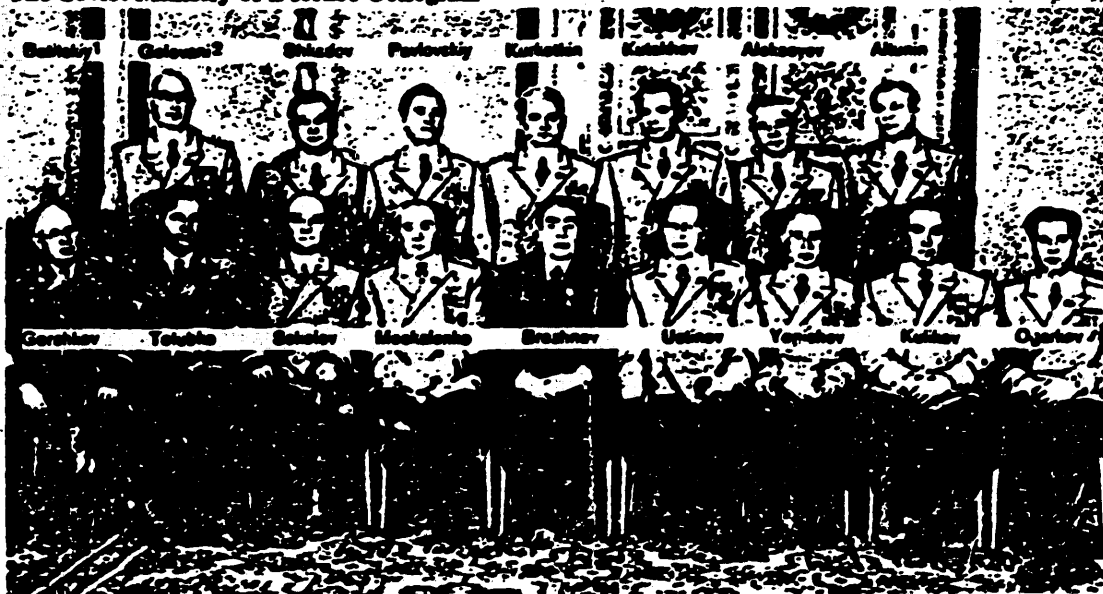
³ The Soviet armed forces include personnel of the Ministry of Defense, the MPD, the Border Guards of the Committee for State Security (KGB), and the Internal Troops of the Ministry of Internal Affairs. Defense Minister D. F. Ustinov issues Orders of the Day to all of those organizations, and they all contribute "military delegates" to the Party congresses. Chief political officers from the political directorates of the Border Guards and the Internal Troops frequently attend MPD meetings.

⁴ *Krasnaya Zvezda*, although it is identified on its masthead as "the organ of the Ministry of Defense," has been an element of political control by the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) since it was founded in 1924.

⁵ F. I. Golikov, Yepishev's predecessor, was promoted to Marshal of the Soviet Union while head of the MPD in 1961.

Figure 2.

The Soviet Ministry of Defense Collegium



1 P.F. Baitalskiy, Commander in Chief of the Air Defense Forces, was absent when this photograph was taken. He has since been replaced by A.I. Koldunov.

2 A.Y. Golovani died in 1976; his replacement, N.F. Shestopalov, will assume his place on the Collegium.

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supervises the *nomenklatura*⁴ of the armed forces. It serves as a focal point in the Central Committee apparatus for coordinating and administering party personnel policies for the armed forces with those of the KGB, the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MVD), and the paramilitary All-Union Voluntary Society for the Promotion of the Army, Aviation, and the Navy (DOSAAF).

The relationship between the Administrative Organs Department and the Main Political Directorate is not clear. Bureaucratically, they are ostensibly equal, but Yepishev holds a higher military rank than Maj. Gen. N. I. Savinkin, the head of the Administrative Organs Department. Yepishev also appears higher on protocol listings than does Savinkin.

⁴ The *nomenklatura* is a listing of positions which cannot be filled without party approval. At the Moscow level, positions such as the Minister of Defense and the Chief of Staff, as well as military district, fleet, and force commanders, probably require Politburo approval before they can be filled.

The pattern of alternating assignments between the staff of the AOD and senior positions with troop units would suggest that the AOD is subordinate to the MPD. Two examples hint at this subordination:

- In 1968 Yu. I. Padorin attended a Baltic Fleet party conference as a worker in the Administrative Organs Department. In 1970 he attended party meetings of the Baltic Fleet and by 1976 was a Rear Admiral and Chief of the Political Directorate of the Northern Fleet.
- In 1968 K. V. Fedorov attended a Leningrad Military District Party Conference as a "responsible worker" in the Administrative Organs Department. He continued to attend rear services activities and by 1976 was a major general and deputy chief of the political office of the Rear Services Central Military Medical Directorate.

AOD Chief Savinkin apparently has no political base of his own. Another man in his position might attempt to play a more active role as a "kingmaker" within the armed forces. In any event, the fact that the party has seen fit to separate the political indoctrination and verification function from maintenance of the *nomenklatura* is further evidence of the leadership's concern with maintaining multiple controls over the military.

Military-Political Relations at the Troop Level

In the past, some Western analysts have concluded that the political officer competes with the professional soldier in the Soviet armed forces, demanding precious training time to conduct political indoctrination. The professional soldier felt that time spent on political indoctrination detracted from the development of military skills and therefore decreased combat effectiveness.

The present interaction of Soviet political and military institutions, however, suggests that interdependence is now accepted by both political and military officers. Current military leaders have been subject to continuous political indoctrination throughout their careers. This indoctrination has stressed the positive aspects of the entire political system. A major example is unrelenting emphasis of the role of the party and its political officers in the Soviet victory in World War II.

Military officers are taught, and many probably believe, that the success of their own units and careers will be possible only with the support of the political apparatus. Moreover, both civilian authorities and military officers have long recognized the dangers of institutional conflicts, both to the party and to the country.

One-Man Command. Soviet emphasis on one-man command, individual accountability, and control reflects a longstanding abhorrence of diffused group leadership and its effect on lower level military decisionmaking. For units at what the Soviets consider the tactical level (corps and below), one-man command is the most important operating principle. This principle, apparently unanimously supported throughout both the party and the military, implies that the commander is responsible for all aspects of his

command—including the morale, discipline, readiness, and combat activity of his troops.

The duties of the unit commander and his deputy for political affairs, the *zampolit*, are described in Soviet disciplinary regulations and field manuals for tactical units in similar terms and are directed toward one main goal—creating an effective military unit. The commander has ultimate responsibility for the performance of his unit measured against this goal, while the *zampolit* plays a monitoring, supportive, and inspirational role. Both men are expected to root out complacency, carelessness, and cowardice—all considered to be inimical to combat readiness and efficiency.

The Internal Service Regulations cover these converging and interdependent roles of the regimental commander and *zampolit*. The commander is specifically charged with, among other things, the political-moral status of personnel, military discipline, combat readiness, political vigilance, and the serviceman's personal concerns and needs.

The *zampolit* is responsible for the organization and status of political work, but the scope of his activity falls short of the commander's responsibilities. For instance, the *zampolit* is responsible for organizing political training for servicemen and for reinforcing troop discipline, but the commander is responsible for the effectiveness of this political training.¹ Thus, at the troop level political matters are not solely the purview of the *zampolit*. Commanders and political officers are jointly responsible for the unit's political activity and training.

Military Councils. At the higher levels of command—in the service, military district, fleet, army, and flotilla headquarters—military policies are considered and formulated in military councils.² Day-to-day command decisions based on these policies are made by the unit commander. Membership in the councils is based on the recommendations of the Ministry of Defense and

¹ It is noteworthy that at the regimental level, daily orders for political training are signed by the commander but not by the *zampolit*.

² The Soviets deny any contradiction between the collegial military council and the one-man command principle. The late Defense Minister Grechko claimed, for instance, that one-man command does not negate but complements collegial forms of military leadership such as military councils.

the Main Political Directorate and is subject to approval by the CPSU Central Committee. Each council includes the commander (who is also the chairman of the council), the chief of the political directorate or department, the first deputy commander (or first deputy commander in chief), the chief of staff, and the civilian party secretary for the corresponding republic, kray, or oblast party committee.

The military councils, whose orders are signed and issued by the unit commander, "discuss and sometimes decide the most important matters and activities of the Soviet armed forces and are fully responsible to the Central Committee and the government for implementing party decisions and orders of the Ministry of Defense." In the event any member of the council disagrees with a decision of the council, he is authorized to report that disagreement to the next higher echelon within his chain of command. The issue would then be raised at the military council at that level.

The presence of the local civilian party secretary on a military council serves the party in several ways:

- It enables local party officials to be aware of and have some voice in military plans affecting local interests (maneuvers, exercises, new construction, and military participation in holiday parades).
- It helps to prevent among the military a sense of isolation from the local community (given the rigid security controls in the Soviet armed forces).
- It provides the leadership with another channel for reporting, through the local party secretary, on the performance of the military commander.
- It facilitates military co-optation of local assets for particular projects.

Interdependence and the Avoidance of Conflict. The one-man command principle and the role and functions of military councils illustrate the institutional interdependence of the professional officer corps and the political apparatus.

The political officer's role in evaluating professional military officers is fundamental to his influence in the military. The requirement for political conformity and participation, which must be evaluated by the political officer on fitness reports, is one additional device the

party uses to exact compliance from the military. Promotions, assignments, and transfers are treated as political matters. The commander not only needs the political officer's support to achieve unit success, he must also have that support for his own career advancement. He must be assessed by the *zampolit* to be politically active and reliable. The political officer, on the other hand, is the commander's subordinate, and he needs the commander's cooperation to be effective and to advance.

The relationship, then, is the dialectic in practice. The party, through the MPD political officer, indoctrinates the troops to work for the regime's military goals. The political officer is expected to reinforce, not weaken, the authority and effectiveness of the commander. A strengthened, more effective, command is the common mission of the military commanders, political organs, and party organizations. These institutions are all responsible for carrying out the leadership's policy in the armed forces and for supporting the authority of the commanders.

The commander and *zampolit* avoid antagonisms which would damage their careers. Individual character and personality notwithstanding, the higher the echelon, the less likelihood of open conflict between the political officer and the commander. At the lower echelons, where there is less direct political pressure, the commander and political officer enjoy fewer benefits from the hierarchical system, and they have less to lose as far as career and political acceptability is concerned. Conflicts, not necessarily political-military ones, may arise more frequently.

Mutual dependence thus best describes the *zampolit*-commander relationship. This dependence determines the degree of success acquired by each. Conflicts may arise between the two, but their mutual concern for the political reliability and technical proficiency of their unit would appear to promote a complementary, rather than an adversary, relationship.

Interchangeability. In the past, interchangeability of the political and command roles was encouraged. In 1959, then Defense Minister Malinovskiy commented favorably on this approach. He described the commander as both a military specialist and a political educator. At the same time, he advised the political

worker to be prepared militarily so that he could substitute for the commander. He noted that the experienced commander with political knowledge could be assigned political work when necessary, and he required that "this exchangeability . . . be conducted permanently, systematically, and not from time to time."

This practice has changed, however, and currently political officers appear to be in a fixed career pattern. There is no recent evidence of permanent exchanges. In the absence of the commander a line officer fills in, and only in unique circumstances in which the commanding officer and the line deputy commanders are absent or disabled is the political officer likely to assume command. Perhaps the most publicized case occurred during the second Sino-Soviet border clash on Damanskiy Island on 14 March 1969. The political officer, a lieutenant colonel, assumed command after the commander was killed and a deputy commander was wounded.

If interchangeability exists, it is more likely to be at the lower echelons, in the form of career service transfer. Such career changes usually involve additional training at an appropriate military school.

Military Representation in the Communist Party of the Soviet Union

One gauge frequently used to measure the climate of military-political relations in the Soviet Union has been the number of military men elected to the Central Committee.* At each party congress a slate of candidates is proposed by the party leadership and, in recent years, has been accepted by the congress unanimously. The election of a military officer who has risen both in the military and in the party is evidence that "he has arrived." However, a review of party membership policies, the function and place of the Central Committee in the decisionmaking process, and Central Committee membership policies suggest that while Central Committee membership is an honor, it is not an

*According to the party statutes, the Central Committee runs the party between congresses, which, since 1961, have been held every fifth year. Its executive body, the Politburo, however, has long been the real source of power, assisted by the CPSU Secretaries and their specialized departments, which form the Central Committee apparatus. The Central Committee usually holds two scheduled meetings—plenums—annually during which party policies and personnel changes are announced and rubberstamped.

accurate barometer of military influence in the policymaking process.

In recent years the extent of Communist Party membership in the armed forces has varied according to the party leadership's perception of the need for military men who are Communists. After the Zhukov crisis in 1957, Khrushchev encouraged the enrollment of large numbers of servicemen in the party at the small-unit level. This move was meant to provide lower ranking servicemen a voice in party policies at the troop level in the armed forces. For example, they could participate in discussions of failures to meet unit goals.

Less than a year after Khrushchev's removal in 1964, the CPSU Central Committee issued two decrees which tightened admissions policies throughout the party. In one decree the Odessa Military District and the Baltic Fleet were cited for their deficiencies in enrolling new party members. The decree was undoubtedly read as a warning to the entire military that party enrollment procedures within the armed forces as well as in civilian party organizations were to be tightened. In the other decree the 23rd Party Congress stiffened the requirements for admission to the party: applicants up to the age of 23 (instead of 20) had to enter the party via the Komsomol, and affirmation by two-thirds, rather than a majority, of a party organization's membership was required for admission. In addition, the minimum party affiliation period for those sponsoring candidates for membership was increased from three to five years.

In January 1967, prior to the enactment of the 1967 Draft Law, the *zampolit* was reinstated at the company level after a hiatus of 12 years, and specialized higher military-political schools were created to train officers for this position. In the higher echelons, party committees were replaced by MPD political organs in military training institutions, research establishments, staffs and directorates of military districts, fleets, groups of forces abroad, and the Defense Ministry's central apparatus. These changes were partly caused by the expected impact of the Draft Law, which lowered the conscription age from 19 to 18. Communist Party organizations in lower echelon military units virtually disappeared because so few enlisted men were party members.

In 1971, the 24th Party Congress approved Brezhnev's plan for a party card exchange, a program actually begun in 1973 and completed in 1974. This was the first formal opportunity for purging the party membership since 1954. The exchange was not heralded as a purge, but it was used to strengthen internal party discipline and to stimulate passive members.

The party card exchange in the military probably prompted the convocation in January 1973 of the Fifth All-Army Conference for Party Secretaries, the first to be held in 13 years. There Brezhnev stressed the "fundamental political importance" of the renewal of membership cards.

In 1976, another decree again emphasized strict criteria for party admissions and warned against manipulating candidate memberships to embellish bookkeeping and reports to higher echelons. Party organizations and the MPD political organs have been blamed for these practices, and, following the 1976 Party Congress, a detailed review was initiated of party admissions policies in the military.

As a result of these measures, during the period 1967-75 the proportion of party members among military servicemen reportedly declined from 22 to 18 percent.

Brezhnev's longstanding campaign for an educated and politically astute—and therefore restricted—party membership, in contrast with the party admissions policies encouraged under Khrushchev, has restricted the possibilities of party membership for enlisted men and young officers. The resulting low party membership has been attributed to constant personnel changes because there was insufficient time for a two-year conscript to become more than a candidate for membership.

Election to Higher Party Organs. Military representation in the Central Committee and Central Auditing Commission is determined by a tightly regulated, centrally controlled election process.⁸ It begins with the election of delegates to the CPSU congress (see

⁸ The Central Auditing Commission audits the treasury and profit-making enterprises such as the party press of the Central Committee. While the Commission lacks any real power, election to it soon serves as a steppingstone to candidate or full membership in the Central Committee, and, therefore, generally is regarded as the lowest rung on the central party hierarchical ladder.

figure 3) and their unanimous election at the congress from a predetermined slate of the Central Committee and its Politburo.

Under party procedures, the election of military delegates to party congresses parallels that of civilian delegates. Military party organizations, including internal and border troops within the Soviet Union, choose representatives at the same time that the corresponding civilian party organizations outside the Soviet Union elect their own delegates to the congresses.

Some idea of the number of military personnel who are members of the CPSU can be derived by using data provided on the party congresses and the election process. At all but one of the recent congresses, the ratio of delegates to party members was announced. In 1976, for example, Party Secretary I. V. Kapitonov reported to the party congress that the "... norms of representation laid down by the Central Committee were one delegate to every 3,000 party members." That year it was announced that 314 military delegates were elected to the CPSU congress.

The decrease in the percentage of Communist Party members who are on active duty in the armed forces from 8 percent to 6 percent has brought a corresponding decline in their representation in the higher party forums (see table 1). From 1961 to 1976, the military representation at the party congresses also declined from 8 percent to 6 percent. Moreover, while the number of military who may vote on the Central Committee appears to have declined less, from 8 percent to 7 percent since 1961, this may be accounted for by the apparently honorary inclusion of two World War II heroes, Marshals I. Kh. Bagramyan and V. I. Chuykov. If they are not included in the military "quota," then the military's voting representation declined to 6 percent.

As might be expected, few new seats have been given to the military voters on the Central Committee (see table 2). This voting body has been enlarged by 112 new seats since 1961, but the military has received only six of these. The number of military personnel in the Central Auditing Commission and the Central Committee combined (voting and nonvoting) has remained

Organizational Structure of the CPSU

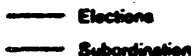


Table 1
Military Representation in the CPSU

	1961	1966	1971	1976
Total CPSU membership	7,622,356	11,548,287	13,745,980	15,029,562
Military members	700,000	880,000	unknown	942,000
Percent military	9	8	unknown	6
Total delegates at party congress	4,608	4,636	4,740	4,990
Military delegates	350	352	unknown	314
Percent military	8	8	unknown	6
Total voting members on Central Committee	175	195	241	207
Military members	14	14	20	20
Percent military	8	7	8¹	7²

¹ If the number were adjusted to exclude Marshals Chuykov and Bagramyan as well as Konev (deceased) this value would be 7 percent.

² If the number were adjusted to exclude Chuykov and Bagramyan, this value would be 6 percent.

nearly constant since 1961—at 34, except in 1966 when there were 35. The holders of these seats are continually changing, however, because of reassignments, retirements, and deaths.

With the exception of Marshals Bagramyan and Chuykov, military voting members of the Central Committee are in key military positions. By virtue of being assigned to certain positions in the Defense Ministry, leading military figures seem assured of this high party status. Few officers below the rank of deputy defense minister become voting members.

Significance and Continuity of Central Committee Membership. Previous analyses of military representation in the central party organs have focused on the elections at the congresses with little attention given to the periods between congresses. In 1971, for instance, most observers saw the increase from 14 to 20 voting members on the Central Committee as a substantial gain in military influence. Within the next two years, however, four of the 20 military officers died or were reassigned or retired and were not replaced.

Only twice since 1961 has the political leadership elected military personnel to the Central Committee between congresses—in 1962, when Yepishev was assigned to head the Main Political Directorate, and in 1968, when S. L. Sokolov was appointed First Deputy Minister of Defense. In all other instances, key officers were not elected to fill the "military" vacancies on the Central Committee when they were appointed to key positions in the Ministry of Defense. Nor has there been a single instance in which a newly appointed commander of a group of forces, district, or fleet was elected to the Central Committee between congresses.

The decline in military representation in the party will probably have little actual effect on the military's influence or role in policymaking. This influence continues to be exerted in other forums such as the Politburo, the Defense Council, and the Military-Industrial Commission. But, paradoxically, high party status for the military continues to be important. Membership on the Central Committee, which seems to have decisionmaking powers only in an acute internal political crisis such as that in 1957, brings with it prestige and probably material perquisites.

Table 2

Military Representation on the CPSU Central Committee and Central Auditing Commission¹

	1961	1966	1971	1976
Central Committee	31 (330)	31 (360)	31 (396)	29 (426)
Full members	14 (175)	14 (195)	20 (241)	20 (287)
Candidates	17 (155)	17 (165)	11 (155)	9 (139)
Central Auditing Commission	3 (65)	4 (79)	3 (81)	3 (85)
Total military representation	34 (395)	35 (439)	34 (477)	34 (511)

¹ Totals (including military and nonmilitary) are in parentheses.

Assuming that party membership policies do not change, we can anticipate that the current number of military members on the Central Committee (20) will probably not go any lower. There is not likely to be any substantial gain or loss at the next party congress in 1981. If Marshals Bagramyan and Chuykov die before then, they probably will not be replaced.

Effectiveness of Political

Indoctrination of the Armed Forces

The MPD's indoctrination efforts² in the armed forces are designed not only to mold an ideal Soviet soldier but also to continue the development of what has been called the "new Soviet man." Yepishev and others have noted that universal military service provides opportunities, under controlled conditions, to reinforce the ideological training of Soviet youth, which begins in the school system. Conscripts who have completed their service are urged to volunteer for projects in remote areas such as the Baikal-Amurskaya branch of the Trans-Siberian railroad. Because of their service and indoctrination, these former servicemen are considered to be "hardened" both physically and ideologically and thus valuable additions to the labor force. The Soviets admit publicly that this ideal is sometimes not achieved.

² According to the *Soviet Military Encyclopedia* (vol. 6, p. 240), the goals of "party-political work" in the armed forces are to train soldiers in the spirit of Communist consciousness; in Soviet patriotism, internationalism, political vigilance, and class hatred toward enemies of the Socialist Fatherland; in loyalty to military duty and the military oath; and to be in constant readiness to defend socialist achievements, the peaceful labor of the Soviet people, and the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the USSR.

Despite the efforts extended in political activity, however, the average serviceman is bored by the political training which is supposed to inspire and educate him. The reaction of the leadership to date has been to increase, not decrease, their efforts, mostly in the form of more of the same.³ Since 1967, when the decree "On Measures to Improve Party-Political Work in the Soviet Army and Navy" focused on the military, the Central Committee has issued several decrees which related to MPD activity, calling for better political discussion, improved lecture propaganda, and most recently, improved ideological and political education.

³ Brezhnev, who could aptly be described as a super samogrit, has provided additional, if not new, substance and direction to political education in the Soviet military as well as in the civilian population. His three recent memoirs, *Moia Zheniya, Vostrozhdeniye, and Tselina* (published in February, May, and November 1978, respectively), which recount the leader's experiences, including those as a political officer and leader, received the Lenin Prize in 1979 and have been given full play in the civilian and military media. They are compulsory reading in the MPD's political training classes. During a May 1978 conference, Ustinov delivered an eulogium on the first two memoirs to which Marshal Sokolov, First Deputy Minister of Defense, and Marshal Ogarkov, Chief of the General Staff, added their praise. The latter advised that the memoirs be used to further military science, education, and training.

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